727 Livestock was practically wiped out;[1] the Germans had confiscated
231 more than two million head of cattle, three million pigs, and three million sheep and goats. A few cattle had been hidden away in the woods and swamps. The only horses left were those which had been either too old or too small for army use, and therefore discarded by the German or Soviet armies. Most small livestock had disappeared, and poultry and bees had vanished completely.

727 The land itself was in a terrible condition.[1] Orchards were
241 neglected; and drainage systems had been either deliberately ruined
433 to flood the land, or permitted to deteriorate. Crop areas had sharply decreased, and yields fell drastically for want of fertilizers and draught power to cultivate the land efficiently. The area of cereals had fallen by 42 per cent., that of technical crops by 86 per cent., and of potatoes, by 53 per cent. Crop rotation had been completely upset, and grasslands ruined. Nearly 20 per cent. of Byelorussian territory was literally a desert.

When the UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia nearly two years after the liberation, agricultural conditions had not materially improved. In the course of a tour through eastern Byelorussia in June 1946, Mission members reported that "throughout the northeast region at least half the rural houses are destroyed." Some regions showed even greater destruction; in the Surazh region east of Vitebsk, only 661 houses remained in 1944 out of 10,136 pre-war dwellings. The town of Surazh itself had 1,395 buildings before the war, of which only three were standing in 1944. By June 1946 there were 150 buildings in the town, all newly built except the three mentioned.

In the Polotsk and Vitebsk oblasts (provinces) only 58 and 64 per cent. respectively of the pre-war crop areas were under cultivation in 1946, two years after the liberation. In 1945 the crop yields were only 25 per cent. of pre-war production. The UNRRA Mission stated: "The low yields and unplanted lands are largely due to lack of tractors and to the plough-land having become overgrown with weeds and brush since 1941. A large proportion of cropland is reported to be now idle because of uncleared mines, trenches, gun emplacements, etc. In the Surazh region uncultivated battlefields total one-quarter of the pre-war 87,500 acres of crop land."

The Polotsk and Vitebsk provinces possessed before the war 115,000 horses and 2,290 tractors; and about 2 million acres of land were under cultivation. In 1946 only 24,000 horses and 760 tractors were available; and 40 per cent. of the cropland remained uncultivated.

000 Since the time of these observations UNRRA Mission members have made many more inspection tours throughout the Republic. Among the many places they have had opportunity to observe was the Lenin Collective Farm in the Minsk raion (district), which they visited in December 1946. Because the experience of this farm is fairly typical, a small part of its history is reproduced in the following paragraphs.

[1] [in the war period from June 1941 to the Summer of 1944 -- Analyst]

Livestock

231 Livestock production in 1946 was still less than a fourth of pre-war, and it was estimated that five years were necessary to restore it fully. Cattle numbers in May 1946 were reckoned by the UNRRA Mission at 30 to 35 per cent. of pre-war; pigs at 10 per cent., and sheep and goats at 25 per cent. Horses, although about 40 per cent. of the pre-war numbers, represented only about 25 per cent. of pre-war horsepower, because of age and small size.

One must bear in mind that these figures include not only the surviving livestock, but also gifts from other parts of the Soviet Union. Since the liberation, tens of thousands of cattle have been sent to Byelorussia by other Republics.

The pre-war numbers of livestock in Byelorussia, West Byelorussia, and the Soviet Union are shown in the table below.

TABLE VI

Pre-War Livestock Numbers in Byelorussia, West Byelorussia and the U.S.S.R.

	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic		Western Byelorussia	Entire Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1938	1934	1938
Horses	n.a.	700,000[1]	779,000	15,400,000	16,200,000
Cows	962,800	1,027,200	1,306,000	33,500,000	50,900,000
Other cattle	391,900	878,100	631,000	11,500,000	25,700,000
Pigs	1,054,400	1,951,000	1,555,000	36,500,000	66,600,000
Sheep and goats	896,700	1,077,300	1,684,000		

1 The 1935 figure

Sources: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1936 and 1939; and Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941.

In this table it is interesting to note that although in Western Byelorussia before 1939 there was almost no mechanization of agriculture, the number of horses claimed is only 9,000 more than in the Byelorussian Republic (approximately the same area) where tractors and other machines did 85 to 87 per cent. of the farm work.

433 As a result of the wartime decrease of livestock and of agricultural products, the production of fats and oils in the U.S.S.R. during 1946 was estimated to be only about 15 to 20 per cent. of pre-war. Before the war the principal sources of edible fats were lard and butter. Consumption averaged about 22 to 25 kilograms per head. The return of an adequate

433 supply is greatly dependent upon recovery in grain production. So long as the grain supply barely meets the needs for bread, very little will be used for hogs and cattle. To regain the pre-war production level of fats will require at least three to five years.

185 231 The Five Year Plan, 1946-50, provides that 17 meat packing plants, 10 poultry farms, 11 urban milk-processing plants, two milk canneries, and 150 dairies be restored or built in the B.S.S.R. As at December 1946 the Minister of Agriculture reported that 26,000 livestock farms were again functioning on collectives. These farms are looked to as the source of an estimated 35,000 tons of butter and cheese products in 1947.

Following is a table which shows the numbers of livestock in the B.S.S.R. in 1950, as fixed by the Five Year Plan.

TABLE VII

B.S.S.R.: Livestock Numbers in 1950 (Planned)

	Total	Including on collective farms
Horses	770,000	330,000
Cattle	2,860,000	852,000
Pigs	2,600,000	300,000
Sheep and goats	2,900,000	600,000

231 Source: The Five Year Plan, 1946-50.

It will be noted that the proportion of livestock held on the collectives is not great, except in the case of horses, which are regarded as means of production and are therefore not allowed in private ownership. A comparison of the preceding figures with those in Table VI shows how heavily the war has reduced the numbers. It is particularly important to note that the number of horses for 1950 is fixed far below the pre-war number existing in Byelorussia after the incorporation of the Western region. As has already been seen, the lack of these animals is the more seriously felt because of the limited number of tractors available.

Improvement of the Collective Farm Organization

731 Despite the major difficulties, Byelorussian farmers in 1946 made considerable progress toward regaining the ground lost during the war. In this respect, they were more fortunate than those in other areas of the Soviet Union, to whom 1946 brought disaster. From Moldavia to the Urals, south to the Kuban and north to Moscow, crops were ruined by the worst drought since 1891. Particularly stricken was the Ukraine, which before the war supplied one-fifth of the grain for the entire U.S.S.R.